Eleventh Plan expenditure target

*103. MS. MABEL REBELLO:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has observed that to meet the Eleventh Plan expenditure target, Government will have to follow a much 'bolder' disinvestment plan;

(b) whether this decision emerged after the full meeting of the Planning Commission chaired by the Prime Minister;

(c) whether the Commission has also called for taking steps to reduce subsidies, especially those for fertilizer and petroleum products; and

(d) if so, the other main decisions taken and by what time these decisions will be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) to (d) Full Planning Commission in the meeting held on September 1, 2009 deliberated on the Discussion Paper on the "State of the Economy". The paper presented an assessment of the current economic situation and a tentative projection of prospects for the last two years of the Plan. Full Planning Commission endorsed the assessment of the current economic situation. The concluding observations in the meeting amongst others mentioned that there was a need to revive investment, particularly in the infrastructure sector, and to contain fiscal deficit within the limits of prudence, by raising resources and using the resources efficiently. The challenge of resource mobilization over the last two years of the Eleventh Five Year Plan needed to be met to sustain the momentum of planned development and to meet adequate funding for the flagship programmes.

BSNL/MTNL share in mobile market

*104. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) are losing share in mobile market and the performance of these Government owned companies has been deteriorating despite having a one year lead of 3G services;

(b) whether in landline the market share of Government operators has gone down from 89.4 per cent in 2008 to 85.8 per cent in 2009 and in mobile from 17 per cent in 2008 to 13.6 per cent in 2009;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the strategy of BSNL and MTNL to protect the market share and to control the decline?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Sir, BSNL and MTNL are losing share in mobile market due to the intense competition and entry of new operators with aggressive tariff plans. BSNL and MTNL are the only 3G operators in the country and the growth of their 3G subscriber base has not been able to offset fall in the overall share in mobile market. The number of 3G connections issued by BSNL and MTNL are 73,133 and 1,29,024 respectively. The reasons for the low growth of 3G subscriber base are given in the Statement-I (*See* below).

As per the performance monitoring report of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) for the quarter ended June 2009, the overall quality of mobile service provided by BSNL and MTNL is comparable to the quality of service provided by the private mobile companies.

(b) and (c) The details of landline, mobile connections and market share of the Government operators is given below:—

	Landline Status				Mobile Status			
	As on 31.03.2008		As on 31.03.2009		As on 31.03.2008		As on 31.03.2009	
Name of the Company	Connections (in lakhs)	% share	Connections (in lakhs)	% share	Connections (in lakhs)	% share	Connections (in lakhs)	% share
BSNL	315.52	80.05	293.46	77.30	407.86	15.62	521.44	13.31
MTNL	36.76	9.33	35.73	9.41	35.34	1.35	44.82	1.14
Total for Government operators	352.28	89.38	329.19	86.71	443.20	16.98	566.26	14.45
TOTAL for private operators	41.85	10.62	50.44	13.29	2167.58	83.02	3351.33	85.55

(d) BSNL and MTNL are augmenting their capacity to enhance the network coverage and to remove the congestion. They are also strengthening their sales and marketing channels. The strategy of BSNL and MTNL to protect the market share and to control the decline are given in the Statement-II.

Statement-I

Reasons for Low Growth Rate of 3G Subscriber Base

For any service/technology, the initial graph is always gradual and picks up gradients after a minimum percentage of population has adopted, experienced and accepted the technology. This was seen in other technologies as well, such as broadband on copper:—

- It is a worldwide phenomenon that initially 3G subscriber base increases slowly, which picks up as 3G network grows to acquire decent coverage and gets stabilized.
- The services have been launched in the select few cities and even in those cities the complete area coverage is yet to be attained.
- Low viewership of mobile TV and presence of less/negligible number of popular IT applications with high bandwidth requirement (cannot be supported by 2G) that can increase demand of 3G services.
- Tariff barrier and high cost of 3G compatible handset is also a deterrent in increasing 3G penetrations.
- Awareness/exposure/experience on the advantages of 3G over 2G services which will increase over time.

Statement-II

Strategy of BSNL and MTNL to protect the market share and to control the decline

Landline:

- Replacement of old telephony switches by State of the art Next Generation Network Switches providing various value added services in landline.
- Providing Broad Band connections along with landline.
- Retention of non payment disconnected numbers by giving installment payment options and pursuing the case on individual basis.
- Five pair cable is being used in place of drop wires to reduce the fault rate.
- Underground paper core cables are being replaced either by Jelley filled cables or by other systems in a phased manner.
- Activity of making the outdoor plant as Pole less is continuously being carried out.
- More and more Remote Switch Units (RSUs) / Digital Line Concentrators (DLCs) are being opened to reduce the loop length of cables.

Mobile:

- Matching and innovative tariff plans and other subscriber friendly schemes are being launched by BSNL.
- Constant monitoring of network to improve the quality of service.
- Launching of new services and bundling schemes in the network for retention of the subscribers.
- Network outage is being very closely monitored.
- Radio Capacity is being augmented to reduce congestion, enhance capacity and improve QoS.

- Network is being optimized.
- Sales teams are being formed to have regular interaction with Points of Sales.
- Monthly meetings are being held with franchisees to get feedback on customer issues.

Agreement on trans—border insurgency

*105. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there exists a regional agreement among SAARC countries on trans-border insurgency;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is aware of the reported statement by a member of the Standing Committee of Nepali Maoist Organization UCPN-M claiming to support the Indian naxal groups;

(d) if so, whether Government has taken up the issue with the Nepalese Government; and

(e) if so, the response of that Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SHASHI THAROOR): (a) to (e) 1. There are two SAARC Regional Agreements to address the issue of trans border insurgency. The **SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism** signed in 1987 and its Additional Protocol signed in 2004. The **Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters** was signed during the 15th SAARC Summit in Colombo (2-3 August 2008).

2. The provisions of the above mentioned SAARC Agreements will enable evidence sharing among Member States and enable seizure and confiscation of funds meant for criminal and terrorist activities.

3. A senior member of UCPN-M had reportedly made a statement that they are extending support and cooperation to Indian Maoists, which was subsequently refuted by the leader of the UCPN-M. The Nepalese Government has assured that it would not allow its territory to be used for any activity against India.

Discussions during the Ninth Trilateral Meet

*108. SHRI BHARATKUMAR RAUT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the issues discussed in the recently held Ninth Trilateral Meet among India, China and Russia; and

(b) the salient features of the decisions taken/agreements signed in the meeting?